

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7499

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 1157

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJECT: FORMER LIBERAL MINISTER AND FORMER LIBERAL SENATOR TO BE
INDICTED FOR BRIBERY

1. ON FEBRUARY 16 ATTORNEY GENERAL ELLICOTT ANNOUNCED THAT
FORMER MINISTER FOR POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS VIC GARLAND,
LIB-W. AUSTRALIA, AND FORMER LIBERAL SENATOR GEORGE BRANSON
WILL BE INDICTED FOR BRIBERY. THE CHARGE AROSE FROM A \$500
CONTRIBUTION THE TWO MADE TO MICHAEL CAVANAUGH, AN INDEPENDENT
CANDIDATE FOR THE SENATE FROM THE ACT IN RETURN FOR HIS PRO-
MISE TO ALLOCATE HIS VOTES TO THE LIBERAL CANDIDATE JOHN KNIGHT.
LIBERAL PARTY SOURCES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA EXPECT GARLAND TO
RESIGN FROM PARLIAMENT NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME OF THE CHARGES
AGAINST HIM.

2. LIBERAL PARTY SECRETARY TONY EGGLETON TOLD POLCONS THAT
GARLAND WOULD HAVE TO BE THROWN TO THE WOLVES ALTHOUGH THE
LIBERAL ORGANIZATION WAS PARTIALLY AT FAULT SINCE GARLAND
HAD BEEN TOLD TO DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY TO DEFEAT FORMER
LIBERAL PRIME MINISTER JOHN GORTON WHO RAN AS AN INDEPENDENT
CANDIDATE IN THE ACT SENATE RACE.

3. COMMENT: RELIABLE SOURCES REPORT THAT SIMILAR QTE CON-
TRIBUTIONS UNQTE WERE MADE BY THE LIBERALS TO OTHER INDEPENDENT
SENATE CANDIDATES FROM THE ACT. IT WOULD NOT BE SUR-
PRISING IF SIMILAR CHARGES ARE MADE IN THE NEAR
FUTURE. END COMMENT.

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HARGROVE

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